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ABSTRACT

The History Channel worked with the Smithsonian National Museum of American History on the permanent exhibition, "The American Presidency: A Glorious Burden," and developed this teacher's manual for grades 4-12. The manual provides creative guidelines, useful resources, and teaching ideas. Teachers will find primary sources, suggestions for interdisciplinary activities, portfolio projects, and a time line similar to one showcased in the exhibition. The manual is divided into the following grade-level sections: "Section One: Grades Four through Six" (I. "Campaigning: Styles and Slogans"; II. "Inauguration: Understanding Primary Sources"; III. "What Does the President Do? A Current Events Project"; IV. "Life in the White House: Internet Research"; V. "Assassination and Mourning: Recording Oral History"); "Section Two: Grades Seven through Nine" (I. "Campaigns and Elections: Slogans, Symbols, and Voters"; II. "Roles and Responsibilities: Ranking the Presidents"; III. "Life in the White House and After the Presidency: Internet Research"; IV. "Assassination and Mourning: Losing a President"; V. "Communicating the Presidency: The Media and Public Opinion"); and "Section Three: Grades Ten through Twelve" (I. "Campaigns and Elections: From the Front Porch to Your T.V."; II. "Roles and Responsibilities: One Day in the Life of a President"; III. "Limits of Power: Analyzing Political Cartoons"; IV. "Assassination and Mourning: Recording Oral Histories"; V. "Communicating the Presidency: The Media and Public Opinion"). A resource list includes 15 books and 14 web sites. (BT)

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The American Presidency: A Glorious Burden.
Teacher's Manual, Grades 4-12.

The History Channel and
National Museum of American History, Washington, DC.

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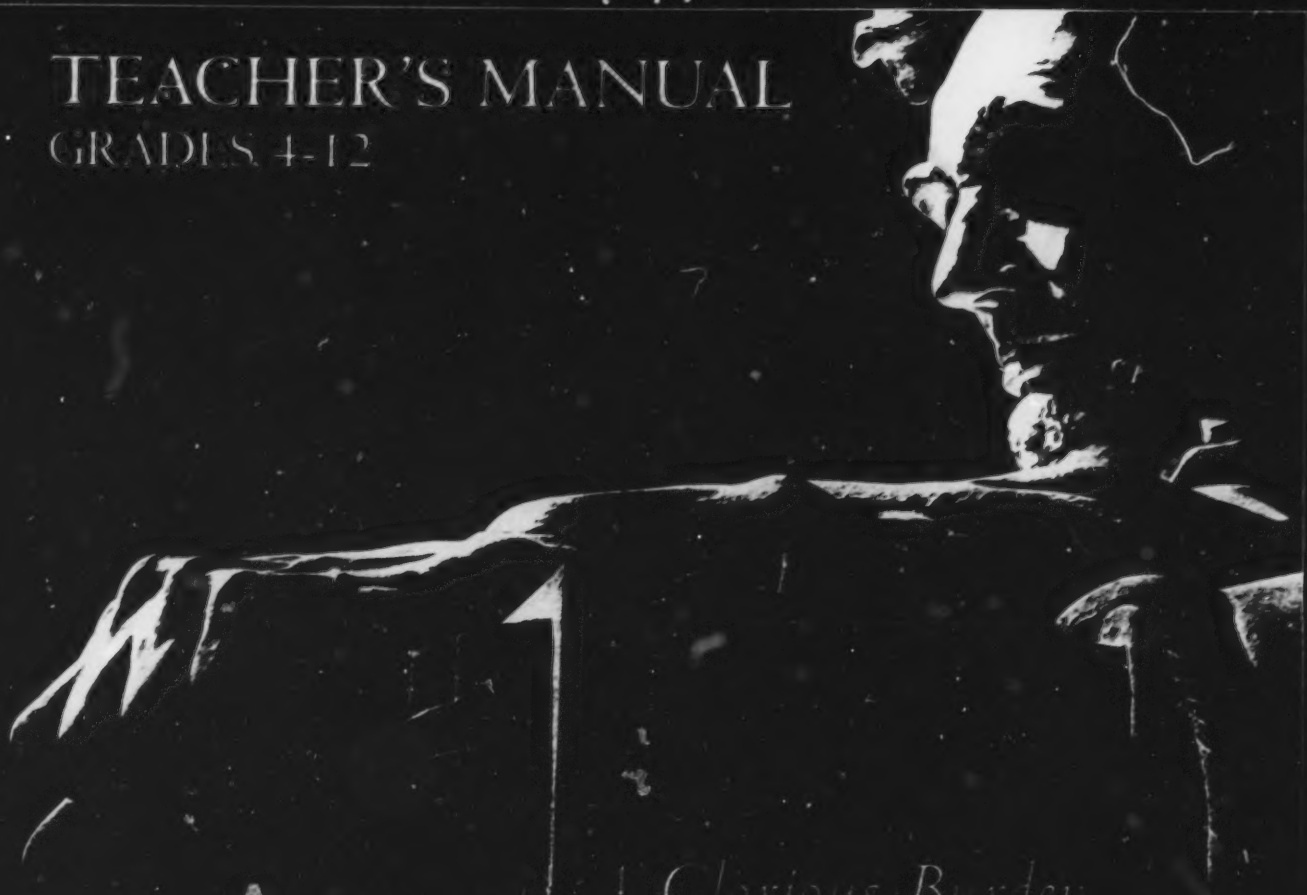
TEACHER'S MANUAL
GRADES 4-12



A Glorious Burden

THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY

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Sigamos La Causa poster
Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History Political History Collections

LETTERS TO THE TEACHER

Dear Teacher:

The History Channel is delighted to work with the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History on its newest permanent exhibition, *The American Presidency: A Glorious Burden*. What a terrific topic! Along with producing videos integral to the exhibition itself, together with the Museum, we have developed this manual for grades four through twelve as part of our commitment to history education.

The American presidency is an important and fascinating part of the curriculum in a broad range of grade levels. Whether you are teaching advanced placement United States history to eleventh graders, or social studies to fifth graders, we hope that this manual will bring the study of presidential history alive in your classroom.

This Teacher's Manual provides creative guidelines, useful resources, and vibrant ideas for you and your students. Inside you will find primary sources, suggestions for interdisciplinary activities, and portfolio projects—as well as a colorful time line, similar to one that is showcased in the exhibition.

We invite you to visit us online at **www.historychannel.com/classroom**, where your students can access safe, interactive resources and you can find free educational materials for your school. We always appreciate your input, so take a minute to let us know how you are using this manual. You can e-mail us at **savehistory@aetn.com** or leave us a message at **1-877-87LEARN** (toll free).

Best Regards,

Abbe Raven
Executive Vice President and General Manager
The History Channel

Libby O'Connell, Ph.D.
Historian-in-Residence
The History Channel

Dear Teacher:

We are pleased to provide you with the Teacher's Manual designed to accompany the National Museum of American History's newest permanent exhibition, *The American Presidency: A Glorious Burden*. This manual was created through a partnership between the Museum and The History Channel, the media sponsor of the exhibition, and results from the dedicated efforts of educators and historians in both organizations.

The Smithsonian's vast presidential collections and national treasures – from campaign memorabilia to the desk on which Thomas Jefferson drafted the Declaration of Independence – attest to our fascination with the presidency and provide us with tangible connections to our leaders and to our past. They commemorate the joyous occasions, as well as the challenging times and tragic events our country has experienced in its relatively short history.

We hope you will find, in this manual, a variety of creative and engaging strategies to help students think about the office of the presidency, its many occupants, and its importance in American and world history. We look forward to your visit, either in person or on the web (**www.americanhistory.si.edu/presidency**), where you will find our virtual exhibit, plus additional resources and activities for studying the presidency.

The National Museum of American History has a longstanding interest in helping teachers find the information and tools they need for teaching American history. Please keep in touch with us, either through the web or by writing to the Office of Education and Visitor Services, MRC603, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560, and let us know how you are using this manual in your classroom. Thanks.

Spencer R. Crew
Director
National Museum of American History

Nancy McCoy
Director of Education and Visitor Services
National Museum of American History

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SECTION ONE: GRADES FOUR THROUGH SIX

Studying the presidency offers students a new way to explore American history. What does it mean to be the president of the United States of America? What is the relationship of the presidency to the American people? Using artifacts and documents, students can begin to uncover this uniquely American experience. The activities suggested are adaptable to various learning styles and levels and are keyed to the *National Standards for History*. The content in this section relates directly to the curriculum requirements of grades 4 through 6. The time line included in this manual supports many of the activities in this section, so keep it handy for your students' easy referral. The topics chosen are based on *The American Presidency: A Glorious Burden*, an exhibition at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History.

TOPICS

I. Campaigning: Styles and Slogans
Presidents Addressed: Washington, Madison, W. H. Harrison, McKinley, Truman, Eisenhower
Time Periods Covered: 1789-1952

II. Inauguration: Understanding Primary Sources
Presidents Addressed: F. Roosevelt, Kennedy
Time Periods Covered: 1930s, 1960s

III. What Does the President Do? A Current Events Project
This activity is based on the job of the president. It can be applied to any president or time period, but is most easily adapted to the administration in office at the time you teach the lesson.

IV. Life in the White House: Internet Research
Presidents Addressed: Adams, Jackson, Lincoln, Cleveland, B. Harrison, F. Roosevelt, Eisenhower
Time Periods Covered: 1797-1955

V. Assassination and Mourning: Recording Oral History
Presidents Addressed: Lincoln, Garfield, McKinley, F. Roosevelt, Kennedy
Time Periods Covered: 1865-1963

I. Campaigning Styles and Slogans

Objectives: Students will be able to explain the purpose of political campaigns and the changes in campaign styles over time, and will be able to describe the various functions of slogans in presidential politics.
Skills: Vocabulary building, reading comprehension, research, creative writing, design, comparison of ideas, evaluation of historical information.
Time: Depending on the number of activities chosen, anywhere from 40 minutes to 3 class periods.
Standards: National Standards in Historical Thinking 1(Chronological Thinking), 2 (Historical Comprehension), 3 (Historical Analysis), Eras 3-9 (1787-1950s).
Materials: Time line (provided), poster boards or large sheets of plain white paper, pencils, rulers, markers, photocopies of the student reading and questions printed below.

Teacher Background

Below is a brief text on presidential campaign styles in American history, followed by student activities. You may photocopy these materials for your students' individual use. Before you begin, however, we recommend the following introduction. Write the word "campaign" in large letters on the wall board. Ask your students to pronounce the word and define it. Is it a noun, a verb, or both? Using a comprehensive dictionary, have a

student look up "campaign." (It comes from the Italian word for "countryside" and was first used in reference to a military operation, with a general leading his troops on a "campaign" throughout the countryside.) Have your students speculate as to why we use the word "campaign" in popular politics today. How is a political campaign different from a military campaign? How is it the same?

Student Reading: Presidential Campaign History

George Washington was the first and only president of the United States to be elected **unanimously** by the Electoral College. From then on, **candidates** have **campaigned** for the office of the presidency. In most presidential elections, there have been only two or three main candidates.

The style of presidential campaigning has changed over the course of United States history. Until the mid-nineteenth century, many people thought it was **undignified** for a candidate to campaign for himself. For example, James Madison's supporters campaigned for him by writing letters to newspapers and **pamphlets** about his beliefs—and about why his **opponent**, Charles Pinckney, was a bad choice. Madison did not travel around the country telling people "Vote for *me*!"

Little by little, the style of campaigning changed. By 1840, when William Henry Harrison was running for president, his supporters staged events in many states to encourage voters to support their candidate. They developed two popular **slogans** to sum up Harrison's appeal, so that people would remember him. One slogan was "Tippecanoe and Tyler Too!" The other was "Log Cabin and Hard Cider." People chanted the slogans and wrote them on banners. Torchlight parades became a popular way of demonstrating public enthusiasm for a political candidate, as well.

By the middle of the 1800s, these parades became a highlight of every election. Hoping to inspire the public to get out and vote for their candidate, hundreds if not thousands of marchers in cities across the country walked through the streets carrying lighted torches on the evenings leading up to an election. During Harrison's campaign, people sold all sorts of items, such as hats and plates, with pictures of log cabins on them, which supported Harrison's election.

While the campaign organizers of a candidate created elaborate events and festivities, the men running for the office of the presidency did not necessarily participate, retaining the perceived **dignity** of the candidate. In the 1896 campaign, for example, William McKinley was an active candidate, speaking largely to crowds and voters brought to his home in Canton, Ohio, but unlike his opponent he did not travel throughout the country. McKinley's style became known as the **"front porch" campaign**.

By the twentieth century, however, campaigning styles had changed. In 1948, when Harry S. Truman ran for his second term in office, he crisscrossed the country by train, giving speeches from the railway car to communities around the nation. Truman's **whistle-stop campaign** proved very effective. Today, presidential candidates travel all over the United States, to meet voters, understand local issues, and build support for their election. They also rely on the power of television and other media to reach audiences directly. Television has had a **profound** impact on presidential campaigns.

Student Activities

1. Reading Comprehension: Have students answer the following text-based questions:

- Define the following vocabulary words: **campaign**, **candidate**, **dignity**, **"front porch" campaign**, **opponent**, **pamphlet**, **profound**, **slogan**, **unanimously**, **undignified**, **whistle-stop campaign**.
- Which president did *not* campaign for the office? Why did candidates in the 1800s let their supporters and organizers represent them in presidential campaigns?

Class Discussion: Why did supporters encourage only certain people to vote for their candidate for much of the nineteenth century? Who was excluded from voting? Why?

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2. **Time Line:** Refer to the time line provided in this manual. Locate James Madison, William Henry Harrison, William McKinley, and Harry S. Truman on the time line. Create a chart with dates that shows the changes in campaign styles illustrated by these four presidents. Students may include images of these different styles.

3. **Discussion:** Why do candidates use slogans? When Dwight ("Ike") Eisenhower ran for president in 1952, his slogan was "I like Ike." What makes a good slogan? Imagine that you or someone you know is running for president. What slogan would you use? With your whole class, write a list of slogans that you think are very effective.

4. **Research Project:** Research William Henry Harrison before he became president, using primary and secondary sources. On a piece of paper, or in class, answer the following questions based on what you've discovered: Who or what was Tippecanoe? Who was Tyler? What was Harrison's family background? Why was the phrase "Log Cabin and Hard Cider" effective as a slogan? Why do you think his campaign managers wanted people to think that Harrison grew up in a log cabin?

5. **Campaign Poster:** Create a colorful campaign poster for a presidential candidate. You may choose a president from history, or you may "nominate" your own favorite role model or individual, or nominate yourself. Include a catchy slogan. What beliefs, or "platform," does your candidate stand for? Indicate these commitments on your poster.

II. Inauguration: Exploring Primary Sources

Objectives: Students will differentiate between primary and secondary sources, analyze a historic quotation, and be able to explain the function of a presidential inauguration.
Skills: Research, analysis and evaluation of historical data, writing, vocabulary building.
Time: About 90 minutes.
Standards: National Standards in Historical Thinking 1(Chronological Thinking), 2 (Historical Comprehension), 3 (Historical Analysis), 4 (Historical Research), Eras 8-10 (1933-1960s).
Materials: Time line (provided), writing paper, pencils or pens, copies of the Constitution.

Teacher Background

Two quotations from famous inaugural addresses have been chosen for students to analyze. The more context students bring to these quotes, one by Franklin D. Roosevelt and one by John F. Kennedy, the more they will extrapolate. You may want to begin by establishing what students know about the state of the country during these eras. This lesson starts with a short presentation on the etymology of "inaugurate."

Student Activities

1. **Inaugural Addresses:** The day before you present this lesson, write the word "inaugurate" in large letters on your wall board. Beneath it, isolate the root word, "augur." Have your students look up these two words in a dictionary at home or in the library. The more comprehensive the dictionary, the more information they will find. (According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, "inaugurate" comes from the Latin verb, *inaugurare*, literally meaning "to tell the future from the flight of birds." The Romans used inaugurations to begin an official's career with good omens. Today, of course, an inauguration is the formal ceremony marking the commencement of an office—in this case, the new president of the United States.) Have your students report on the derivations they found at the beginning of the class period.

- **Discussion:** With your class, discuss the two important events that occur at a presidential inauguration: the Oath of Office and the Inaugural Speech. The oath is taken from the United States Constitution. Have your students find the section of the Constitution that includes the Oath of Office. A member of your class should read it aloud so that everyone is familiar with it.

- **Primary and Secondary Sources:** This is a good moment to introduce the difference between primary sources and secondary sources. For example, you can point out that the Constitution is a primary source, an original document created at the time of an event. Primary sources in history are created by people who participated in or witnessed an event at the time it took place. A photograph and a newspaper interview are two other examples of primary sources. Generally, a secondary source is created by a person or group of people who did not witness an event, but based their information on other sources. A textbook is one example of a secondary source. Create two lists on your wall board with the headings "Primary" and "Secondary." Have your class identify at least four examples for each list. You may offer your own suggestions and have individuals identify the list to which your suggestions belong. One of your suggestions should be "a presidential inaugural address." Make sure your class understands that a speech, such as an inaugural address, is a primary source.

- **Inaugural Excerpt Analysis:** Below are two quotations from inaugural addresses, one by Franklin D. Roosevelt and one by John F. Kennedy. You may write them on the board, or you may photocopy them and distribute them to your class. As homework or as part of an in-class discussion, your students should complete the activities that follow the quotations. (The full-length inaugural addresses can be found at **www.ec.ukans.edu/carrie/docs/amdocs_index.html**.)

Student Inaugural Excerpt Analysis

Franklin D. Roosevelt, First Inaugural Address, March 4, 1933 (excerpt)
The United States was experiencing a terrible economic depression, known as the Great Depression, at the time of Roosevelt's first inauguration.
So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself—nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance.

John F. Kennedy, Inaugural Address, January 20, 1961 (excerpt)
In his speech, Kennedy declared that his presidency would represent the "celebration of freedom," closing with these two sentences:
And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country. My fellow citizens of the world: ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man.

1. Locate the author of each document from which the quotation is taken on the Time Line of the Presidency. How long did each of them serve as president of the United States?
2. Using a dictionary, make sure you can define all the words used in each quotation.
3. Paraphrase each quotation. On a piece of paper, write an explanation of what the author meant. Compare your explanation with the explanations of other students in your class.

Class Discussion: Do these quotations still have meaning for people today? Do they express useful ideas for people to remember? Why or why not?

Extended Activity: Discuss why a presidential inauguration is a public ceremony. What is the purpose of an inaugural address? Compare that to the purpose of a state of the union address. If you were elected president, what would you like to include in your inaugural address? Create a list on your wall board of ideas your class would like to hear in an inaugural speech. As individuals or in small groups, write your own inaugural speeches and present them to the class.

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III. What Does the President Do? A Current Events Project

Objectives: Students will name and explain the various roles and responsibilities of the president of the United States. Students will use newspapers and news magazines as an information source.
Skills: Research, reading comprehension, analysis of definitions, classification, creative presentation of work, small group work.
Time: 15 minutes a day for at least ten days.
Standards: National Standards in Historical Thinking 1(Chronological Thinking), 2 (Historical Comprehension), 3 (Historical Analysis), 4 (Conducting Historical Research), Eras 3-10 (1787-present).
Materials: Poster board, tape, markers, plus clippings brought in by class members.

Teacher Background

The president of the United States serves the country through a variety of roles. Each individual president brings his own strengths and personality to the office. The events that occur during his administration require different abilities as well. In this activity, your class will create posters that define and illustrate presidential responsibilities. By following current events in newspapers and news magazines, and bringing in relevant clippings, your students will learn to identify the different roles of the president and become familiar with political news coverage.

Student Activities

1. **Presidential Roles Brainstorm:** Have your students brainstorm about the president's primary responsibilities. One student should write these ideas on your wall board.

   - **Discussion:** Below is a list of the president's primary responsibilities developed by the National Museum of American History. Discuss these roles with your class to ensure comprehension: **Commander in Chief, Chief Executive, Chief Diplomat, Ceremonial Head of State, National Leader, Party Leader,** and **Manager of the Economy**. (See page 13 for a description of each role.)

2. **Presidential Roles Poster Project:** Divide the class into seven groups. Each group is assigned one poster. Each poster represents one of the main presidential responsibilities, and should be titled appropriately. For example, one poster should be titled "Commander in Chief."

   - **Poster:** Examples of what the president does under each category should be clearly listed on the left side of the poster. The right side will become a scrapbook for clippings illustrating this category of responsibility. The clippings may include photographs as well as articles. The clippings do not have to correspond exactly to the written examples on the left side of the poster.

   - **Clippings:** Every day, students should bring in clippings from home about the president. You may choose to make this a contest between groups, or they may all work together in bringing in clippings. However, each group will be ultimately responsible for its poster. At the end of the project, prominently display the posters around the classroom.

Extended Activity: Similar posters, with student-created "clippings," may be developed for presidents in American history. Referring to the time line provided and to reference books, web sites, etc., each student may choose one president and show how that president fulfilled, or did not fulfill, the various roles and responsibilities of his office.

IV. Life in the White House: Internet Research

Objectives: Students will describe the various functions and the symbolic meaning of the White House, and become familiar with its history. Students will be able to identify tensions between public duties and expectations and private and family needs.
Skills: Internet research, identification and evaluation of historical data, writing.
Time: Approximately 1 hour online.
Standards: National Standards in Historical Thinking 1(Chronological Thinking), 2 (Historical Comprehension), 3 (Historical Analysis), 4 (Conducting Historical Research), Eras 3-10 (1787-Present).
Materials: Access to the World Wide Web.

Teacher Background

This topic has been designated as an Internet project because of the quality of student-friendly web sites pertaining to the White House. Here you will find two carefully selected sites and some suggestions for activities.

Student Activities

1. **White House Brainstorm:** Before you begin, have your class brainstorm about the White House. Where is it? What purposes does it serve? The four functions of the White House are: the home of the president and his family, the office and headquarters for the president and his staff, a historic museum for the public, and a symbol of the United States presidency.

2. **White House as Symbol:** Clarify the role of the White House as a symbol. What is a symbol? The American eagle is a symbol of the United States. The Star-Spangled Banner is another national symbol. The White House symbolizes the president. That's why a reporter may say, "Today the White House issued a statement on foreign policy." Obviously, a building does not give a statement, but its name symbolizes the presidency. On the wall board, have your students list other symbols with which they are familiar.

3. **Web Quest:** Two easy-to-use web sites have been provided, **www.whitehouse.gov** and **www.whitehousehistory.org**. (When your students visit the **www.whitehouse.gov** site, make sure they use ".gov," not ".com," as the extension for this web address, as the latter is an inappropriate site.) The answers to the questions below are located on these sites. The questions may be photocopied for distribution.

White House Web Quest

Visit these two web sites: **www.whitehouse.gov** and **www.whitehousehistory.org** to answer these questions:

1. Who was the original architect of the White House? **2.** Why did Calvin Coolidge stop sitting on the White House front porch? **3.** Who owned Fala? **4.** Who was Baby McKee? **5.** What is the Blue Room used for? **6.** On the mantel of the State Dining Room is a quotation by John Adams. What does it say? **7.** Briefly report a story about Tad Lincoln. **8.** Why is the White House white? **9.** Describe Andrew Jackson's inaugural reception. **10.** Which president gave the first televised news conference? **11.** Can you list ten facts about the White House? (Indicate which of the four functions of the White House your facts support. Also indicate which web site provided the information.)

Extended Activity: Have your students address the following questions: Would it be fun to grow up in the White House? Would it be hard to lose your privacy? What does it mean to "live in a fishbowl"? Using the web sites mentioned above and other reading materials, students should research and take notes on family and private life at the White House. The next day, two students should each create a list on the wall board. One list should be headed "Pros," the other "Cons." Your class should debate the pros and cons of growing up in the White House, citing specific examples from their research. The students at the board should write down the arguments mentioned under the appropriate heading.

V. Assassination and Mourning: Recording Oral History

Objectives: Students will be able to describe and explain how tragic public events have a significant impact upon private individuals, how personal memory is valid history, and how they can be part of recording history.
Skills: Research, interviewing, use of tape recorder to capture primary source material, note-taking, oral presentation.
Time: This is primarily a homework assignment, with possible class time allotted for oral presentations; 1 class period is sufficient for setting up the assignment.
Standards: National Standards in Historical Thinking 1(Chronological Thinking), 2 (Historical Comprehension), 3 (Historical Analysis), 4 (Conducting Historical Research), Eras 8 and 9 (1929-1970s).
Materials: Time line (provided), pencils, paper, and history textbook or other sources. Optional: still cameras, audiocassette recorders, videotape recorders.

Teacher Background

The death of a president, especially by assassination, traumatizes the nation and plunges it into a period of questioning, reflection, and mourning. Four presidents—Lincoln, Garfield, McKinley, and Kennedy—have died from assassins' bullets. Millions of Americans can never forget where they were or what they were doing when they heard that John F. Kennedy was shot and killed in Dallas, Texas, on November 22, 1963. Many Americans vividly remember the day Franklin D. Roosevelt died, after thirteen years in office during one of the most dramatic eras in our nation's history.

Student Activities

1. **Oral History:** Divide your class in half. One half should be assigned the death of Franklin D. Roosevelt; the other should be assigned the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Individual students or small groups of students should interview a family member or neighbor about his or her recollections of one of these events.

   - **Research:** The more background the interviewers understand about the event, the better the interview. Encourage your students to read about the topic they have chosen before they develop their questions.

   - **Interview:** Students may take notes on paper, record the interview with an audiotape recorder, or use a video camera with the help of an adult or older sibling. (Guidelines for interviewing techniques can be found at **www.historychannel.com/classroom**.)

   - **Presentation**: Students may present the results of their oral history interviews through a poster, in an oral presentation in class, or by playing their recordings in class. All presentations should be less than six minutes. All students should create a one-page description of their interview, including the name of the person interviewed, the date, the topic, and a brief story summary. These may be compiled and presented to the community library or local historical society.

   - **Discussion:** After the presentations, discuss the pros and cons of oral history with your class. What is missing from a personal story that a textbook provides? What is unique about oral histories? What did your class learn that impressed them the most?

Extended Activity: Students may research another assassination or death of a president in office and create their own diary or newspaper account of the event and the public's reaction.

SECTION TWO: GRADES SEVEN THROUGH NINE

Studying the American presidency offers students an unparalleled opportunity to explore the democratic political process and to deepen their understanding of how this process fits into the whole of American history. While learning about subjects as diverse as campaigns, the media, and presidential roles and responsibilities, students will sharpen their analytical skills and broaden their historical knowledge. The activities suggested are adaptable to various learning styles and levels and are keyed to the *National Standards for History*. The content in this section relates directly to the curriculum requirements of grades 7 through 9. The topics chosen are based on *The American Presidency: A Glorious Burden*, an exhibition at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History.

TOPICS

I. Campaigns and Elections: Slogans, Symbols, and Voters
Presidents Addressed: W. H. Harrison, Grant, McKinley, Harding, Coolidge, Hoover, F. Roosevelt, Eisenhower, L. Johnson, Reagan
Time Periods Covered: 1840-1980

II. Roles and Responsibilities: Ranking the Presidents
Presidents Addressed: could involve all presidents
Time Periods Covered: 1797-today

III. Life in the White House and After the Presidency: Internet Research
Presidents Addressed: Hayes, and current administration
Time Periods Covered: 1877-1881, present day

IV. Assassination and Mourning: Losing a President
Presidents Addressed: Lincoln, Truman, Kennedy, Ford, Reagan
Time Periods Covered: 1863-1981

V. Communicating the Presidency: The Media and Public Opinion
Presidents Addressed: could involve all presidents
Time Periods Covered: 1797-today

I. Campaigns and Elections: Slogans, Symbols, and Voters

Objectives: Students will be able to explain the important role that campaigns, with their slogans and symbols, play in the American political process. Students also will be able to describe how the political process has become more inclusive over time.
Skills: Research, analysis of a primary source, evaluation of historical data.
Time: 1 to 3 class periods.
Standards: National Standards in Historical Thinking 1 (Chronological Thinking), 2 (Historical Comprehension), 3 (Historical Analysis), 4 (Historical Research), Eras 3-10 (1787-present).

Teacher Background

Presidential campaigns are important national events that capture and reflect the fundamental principles of democracy. Every four years, Americans are given an opportunity to participate in a national dialogue about important issues and to choose the country's next leader. Because this is a national election, presidential candidates must reach out to as broad an audience as possible, crisscrossing the country to appeal to voters.

For much of American history, political parties took responsibility for orchestrating presidential campaigns. Today, candidates often work outside of the party apparatus, setting up their own campaign organizations to help them get elected. As a result of these changes, the role of the political party in the campaign itself has changed, while media experts and public relations teams now take active roles in the process, promoting their candidates in every possible venue. Such media coverage ensures that presidential campaigns remain highly visible, public events.

FDR tire cover
Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of American History, Political History Collections

Harrison log cabin
Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of American History, Political History Collections

americanhistory.si.edu

Student Activities

1. **Campaign Slogans:** There have been many memorable presidential campaigns and slogans in American history. Slogans can be effective for different reasons. They may express the character or aims of a candidate, or they simply may be catchy phrases that voters will remember (much like advertising jingles today). Have students read the slogans listed below and discuss what each means. For each slogan, students should answer the following questions: Is the slogan catchy? Does it work as a rallying call to voters? Why or why not? What, if anything, does it tell voters about the person running for office and about the issues of the day?

Presidential Campaign Slogans

"Log Cabin and Hard Cider"	William Henry Harrison, 1840
"Let Us Have Peace"	Ulysses S. Grant, 1860
"Patriotism, Protection and Prosperity"	William McKinley, 1896
"Return to Normalcy"	Warren Harding, 1920
"Keep Cool with Coolidge"	Calvin Coolidge, 1924
"A Chicken in Every Pot, and a Car in Every Garage"	Herbert Hoover, 1928
"A Big Man for a Big Job"	Franklin D. Roosevelt, 1932
"I Like Ike"	Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1952
"All the Way with LBJ"	Lyndon B. Johnson, 1964
"Let's Make America Great Again"	Ronald Reagan, 1980
"America Needs a Change"	Walter Mondale, 1984

- **Discussion:** After analyzing these slogans, discuss with the class what makes a good campaign slogan. Then, have students choose one of the slogans listed here, or one they find themselves, and do additional research about that particular presidential campaign. Do their opinions of the slogan change after they have learned more about the political moment in which it was written? Why or why not?

Extended Activity: Ask students to imagine that they are running for office in their own school, perhaps as president of their class. Each student should come up with a campaign slogan that will help him or her win the election. Students may want to create posters or banners to display their slogans. Many presidential campaigns create such visual aids, as well as buttons, hats, and other trinkets, like those pictured on the previous page, to help increase voter awareness of their candidates. Students may get some ideas from past presidential campaigns. Refer to the Resources section for print and electronic sources. After everyone has come up with a slogan, and visual aids, present them to the class. As a group, discuss which are most effective and why.

2. **Voting Rights:** As a homework assignment, have students read the Constitution to discover what constituted a "voter" in 1791. Have students define the word "suffrage." In class, have students discuss their findings. Following the class discussion, ask students to pose questions regarding suffrage: How and when did voting rights change? When did African Americans get the vote? women? citizens under twenty-one? As a class, compile a list organized by date that shows changes in voting rights over the years, based on property requirements or wealth, age, gender, and race and ethnicity. Discuss the overall impact of these changes on the political process.

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II. Roles and Responsibilities: Ranking the Presidents

Objectives: Students will be able to explain the responsibilities of the president and will evaluate the successes and failures of past presidents.
Skills: Internet and print research, analytical writing, public speaking, evaluation of historical data.
Time: 2-week project for student team work outside of class. 15-minute presentations throughout a month or a unit. 2 to 3 class periods for vote and discussion.
Standards: National Standards in Historical Thinking 1 (Chronological Thinking), 2 (Historical Comprehension), 3 (Historical Analysis), 4 (Historical Research), Eras 3-10 (1787-present, depending on administrations chosen).

Teacher Background

As a nation, we place no greater responsibility on any one individual than we do on the president, whose job is extremely complex and demanding. While the Constitution provides only a vague outline of the American presidency, Americans have defined and extended the powers of the office over time. Some presidents thrive at balancing the numerous roles they are expected to play, while others have stumbled, unable to master the many duties of the office.

Commander in Chief: The president serves as commander in chief of the armed forces, and during national crises and war, the power of the presidency has increased to include approval of military tactics, control over the economy, and authority to limit the civil rights of Americans at home.

Chief Executive: The president serves as the government's chief executive, or administrative officer, with the responsibility to see that the laws are faithfully executed. The president also has the authority to approve or veto laws proposed by Congress and to appoint officials, with the advice and the consent of the Senate. The federal government has grown in size and increased in function, leaving the chief executive to head an enormous bureaucracy. Through the cabinet and through federal agencies, the president has the power to influence every activity of the national government.

Chief Diplomat: As chief diplomat, the president has the power to make treaties with foreign governments and to maintain formal relationships with other nations. The president is expected to defend America's security and economic interests and also to promote democratic principles and human rights around the world.

Ceremonial Head of State: Since the United States has no monarchy or figurehead, the duties of serving as the ceremonial head of the nation fall on the president. Some of these activities are solemn; some are festive. Although these responsibilities can at times seem trivial, they offer an important opportunity for the president to connect with Americans, who are ultimately an essential source of presidential power.

Manager of the Economy: The increasing influence of the federal government over the economy has led Americans to expect the president to maintain the financial health of the nation. Many candidates run on the promise of creating sustained economic prosperity, and the public expects them to deliver.

Party Leader: Although the writers of the Constitution envisioned that the president would be above partisan politics, the system that they created encouraged, if not demanded, a rise of political parties and established the president as either a party leader or an ineffective executive. Several presidents rose to the office by building political parties or reshaping those that already existed by establishing new coalitions and bringing in new supporters.

National Leader: Americans ask the president to do more than govern; they want him to lead. While the role of president is multifaceted, no duties may be more important than the president's responsibilities to articulate the nation's principles, to take on new challenges, and to comfort and inspire in times of crisis.

Student Activities

For the following project you may want to choose 10 to 15 presidents for the students to research in pairs, depending on which eras you plan to teach. In order for the project to be successful, students should be able to choose from a group of presidents with different styles, who succeeded and failed in a variety of roles. Because the theme of this project is evaluation of presidential performance, you may want to incorporate peer-evaluations and self-evaluations, so students can practice evaluating their own performances.

1. Presidential Evaluation: Assign each student a partner, and explain that they are about to become advocates for a past president. Allow them to choose, or assign them, a president. Then explain that it is their responsibility to learn all about this president's strengths and weaknesses. They must try to convince their classmates that their president deserves the title of Best President. This project has five components.

- **Roles and Responsibilities Handout:** (To be given to every member of the class by the group presenting.) This two-page handout should include the name of the students' president; the years he was in office; a statement about the economic, social, and political climate of the nation during his tenure; a chart that identifies and explains his achievements and failures in each of the presidential roles described above; two quotes from speeches or public statements given by the president while in office; one quote from an historian about the president's legacy; a summary statement identifying the two roles the president most effectively fulfilled; a bibliography of print and Internet resources used.

- **"Top Two" Poster:** (To be presented and hung on the wall the day of the group's oral presentation.) The poster should be clearly divided in half and should identify and explain the president's top two successes and top two failures. Since this poster will be hung on the wall as a visual reference during the vote for Best President, instruct the students to make their points clear and simple and to use visual aids, such as drawings, charts, and photos, to support their arguments.

- **Oral Advocacy:** (Each group of students will have ten minutes to present their poster and to advocate for their president.) The strongest presentations will confront the president's weaknesses in order to explain why his strengths outweigh them. Students should address the following questions: Did the president leave an especially important legacy? Did he take an extraordinary risk? Did he go beyond his constitutional limits? This is the time for students to convince the audience that their president is the Best President.

- **Vote for Best President:** After students have read all the handouts and heard all the presentations, ask them to refresh their memories by viewing the posters on the walls one last time. What criteria are students using to make their decisions?

- **Discussion:** Once the votes are tallied, discuss the results in small groups or as a class. Discuss how students voted and what criteria they used to make their decisions. What makes a great president? Which roles did students decide are most important for a president to excel at? Which are least important? Have the answers to these questions changed over time? What role(s) do students think will be most important for the president to fulfill in the twenty-first century?

III. Life in the White House and After the Presidency: Internet Research

Objectives: Students will be able to explain the various roles that the White House serves within each presidential administration.
Skills: Internet skills, research, analysis of historical source material, résumé writing.
Time: 1 to 2 class periods.
Standards: National Standards in Historical Thinking 3 (Historical Analysis), 4 (Historical Research), Eras 3-10 (1787-present).

Teacher Background

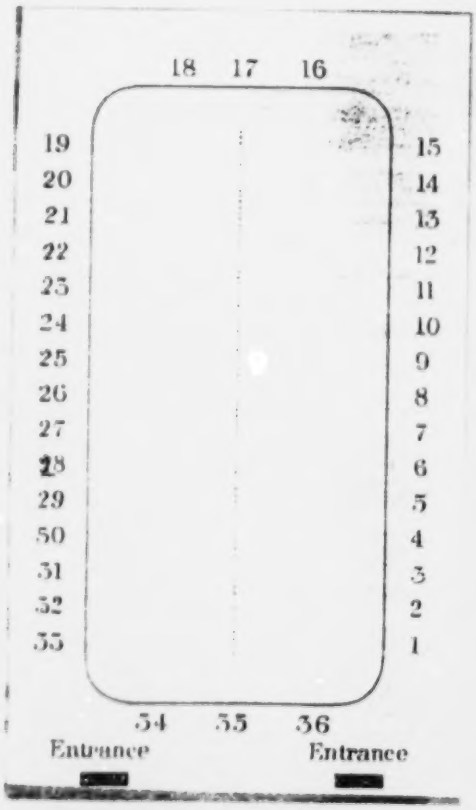
Like the president, the White House has to fill many different roles. First and foremost, the White House is the president's office and a home for him and his family. Even though George Washington did not live in the White House, he set an important precedent when he decided that the president should work and live in the same residence. Every president since has followed his example.

The White House, as a historic building, also serves as a national museum and a symbol of American democracy. It is the place where important ceremonies and official gatherings occur, but it is also a place where ordinary American people have been frequent visitors. In 1800, for example, Thomas Jefferson opened the White House lawn to the public, and many presidents since have held similar kinds of festivities. Such events help make the American people feel that democratic ideals are being upheld and that they have access, admittedly limited, to the chief executive.

Student Activities

1. **Web Search:** Using the official White House web site at **www.whitehouse.gov**, and the White House Historical Association web site at **www.whitehousehistory.org**, have students go on a search to learn firsthand about the many roles that the White House plays! Students should find at least one picture of people, events, or rooms—from any time period—that demonstrates each of the White House's four roles mentioned in the text. (For example, students could use a picture of a meeting of foreign dignitaries to show how the White House serves as the president's office.) If possible, have students print out their pictures and share them with the class. Students may want to create a classroom exhibit on the White House. Alternatively, they can simply record the web site addresses where they located their images, along with brief descriptions of the photographs, under the headings for each role.

2. **White House Dinner Party:** Many different people, some of them quite important, have graced the dinner table at the White House. As with any dinner party, figuring out who should sit next to whom, that is, who will get along well and who will not, is often a difficult task—especially when so many of the guests do not know each other very well! That is why seating plans, like the one shown here, used by Rutherford and Lucy Hayes, were so helpful to the hosts in deciding where their guests should sit for a successful dinner party. Ask students, individually or in small groups, to imagine that they get to have a dinner party at the White House. Like the Hayeses, they will need to invite 36



Blank Hayes seating plan
Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of American History, Political History Collections

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people to fill up the table. Among their guests should be 10 past presidents (living or dead), each of whom will bring a guest. A president might choose to bring his wife, one of his children, or a close friend. The student also should invite his or her own special guest to the dinner party. The remaining 14 people can be anyone the students choose, from history or today's world. Ask students to consider whom they will choose and why. Once students have made their selections, they should design a seating chart, using the plan from the Hayes administration, indicating where each guest will sit. Who will sit next to whom, and why? What will or might they discuss? Why? It may be useful for students to refer to an etiquette book, like one by Miss Manners or Emily Post, for help in mapping out their seating arrangements. Students should be prepared to explain their choices to their classmates.

3. **Presidential Résumé:** When a president leaves office and the White House, there is no clear path ahead of him. Some presidents, such as George Washington, have chosen quiet retirement, spending time with their families and engaging in the activities that they find personally fulfilling. Others, such as William Howard Taft, have assumed active public roles. Whatever the former president's path, finding a fulfilling role can be very difficult for someone who has just left the most powerful job in the country! Have students imagine that they have been drafted to write a résumé for a president who is about to leave office in order to help him find employment after the presidency. (Refer to our Resources section for helpful tips on writing a résumé.) Students may choose any former president they wish and do some additional research on his background. When and where was he born? What was his profession before entering office? What are his skills and abilities? What kind of education did he receive? After reading about the president and taking some brief notes, students are ready to write their résumés. Remind students that a good résumé should be factual, brief, and informative and should highlight the candidate's strengths.

IV. Assassination and Mourning: Losing a President

Objectives: Students will be able to describe and explain the impact that presidential assassinations and assassination attempts have had on the American people and will practice the techniques of conducting an oral history.
Skills: Interviewing, research, analysis of oral history, evaluation of historical data.
Time: 2 to 3 class periods.
Standards: National Standards in Historical Thinking 3 (Historical Analysis), 4 (Historical Research), Eras 9 and 10 (1945-present).

Teacher Background

The American political system faces one of its greatest challenges when the life of the president is threatened. An attempt on the president's life throws the country into a period of questioning and reflection, and a presidential assassination traumatizes the nation and leads to a period of deep mourning. Since 1835, during the administration of Andrew Jackson, there have been eleven attempts on the president's life, four of them fatal. Abraham Lincoln, James Garfield, William McKinley, and John F. Kennedy all were killed in office by assassins' bullets.

The manner in which America mourned Abraham Lincoln evolved into rituals that shaped the way the country reacted to future tragedies, including John F. Kennedy's assassination one hundred years later. Mourning for Lincoln combined the use of traditional military rites, the need for official governmental commemoration, and the desire to provide a means for the public expression of grief. As his body was transported to Springfield, Illinois, parades in many cities honored Lincoln. The two-week-long funeral procession, retracing the train journey Lincoln took as president-elect, allowed one million Americans to pay their respects to "the savior of the Union."

Since 1901, the Secret Service has been charged with protecting the president from would-be assassins and has done its utmost in this capacity. However, the president of the United States is necessarily vulnerable to physical harm, given the nature of our democratic political system, which demands accessibility to and accountability from its elected leaders. Since John F. Kennedy's death in 1963, the number of agents assigned to protect the president has increased, and new technologies have brought improved security measures and better communication.

Because attempts on the president's life are so traumatic for the country, people who have lived through such events usually have very strong memories associated with them. There have been five attempts against a president's life since World War II, although only one was successful. Many people alive today remember these events clearly. Listening to the stories of these people helps us piece together the past and better understand our history.

Student Activities

1. **Oral History:** Have students conduct an oral history interview with someone who remembers one of the events below. Students should ask their interviewees how they felt when they heard the news of the assassination or of the attempt. They should also inquire how the country as a whole responded to the situation. What sense of crisis was created by the events? Students will want to record their subjects' memories, so that they can share their findings with the class. They may use an audiotape or videotape recorder to document the interview. Either way, they can find guidance for preparing for, taping, and analyzing the interview on the following web site: **www.historychannel.com/classroom**. When they have finished their interviews, they should select one clip or segment to share with the class.

1950: Harry S. Truman; 1963: John F. Kennedy; 1975: Gerald R. Ford;
1975: Gerald R. Ford (second attempt); 1981: Ronald Reagan

V. Communicating the Presidency: The Media and Public Opinion

Objectives: Students will be able to describe how the president uses various media to communicate with the public. Students will discover the increasingly important role that media coverage has played in shaping public opinion of the president.
Skills: Analytical research, evaluation of primary sources, comparison of ideas, small group work, presentation of material.
Time: 2 to 3 class periods.
Standards: National Standards in Historical Thinking 2 (Historical Comprehension), 3 (Historical Analysis), 4 (Historical Research), Eras 3-10 (1787-present).

Teacher Background

The ability to communicate effectively and efficiently to the American public is one hallmark of a successful presidency. Mastering the media of the period, whether newspapers, newsreels, radio, television, or even the Internet, is crucial to a president's capacity to excite people and convey the hopes and aspirations of his administration.

For some, the challenge of keeping up with the technological changes and demands in various media greatly limited their presidencies. Others achieved much politically because of their proficiency. Franklin Roosevelt, for instance, used the radio masterfully to speak directly to the American people, and Ronald Reagan's ease with television earned him the nickname "the Great Communicator."

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Student Activities

1. **Media:** Have the class discuss the definition of "media." What types of media are there? (newspapers, magazines, radio, newsreels, television, Internet) How have these media changed over time? Create a time line on the wall board to chart, as a class, when each of the different media was in use. Have students consider how much more complex this issue is now as we move into the twenty-first century.

2. **Primary Sources:** As homework, assign students a fifty-year year period (1750-1800, 1800-1850, etc.) and ask them to select a president within that time period. Students should research the selected president's use of the media of that time. For example, if a student is assigned 1750-1800, she or he might select Thomas Jefferson and look for primary sources, newspapers and broadsides, that show how Thomas Jefferson communicated with the public or how the press of the day covered what Jefferson did. A student who is assigned the time period 1950-2000 might select Reagan, etc. In class, create teams of five students each, making sure that each student in the group represents a different time period. Have the small groups share information with one another, looking for similarities and differences in the use of the various types of media over time, and create a simple chart outlining their findings. Each group should send a representative to the board to chart its results. As a class, examine your findings to draw some conclusions about the changing use of the media over time.

3. **Current Affairs:** Over the period of a few days or a week, ask students to scan a daily newspaper or a weekly news magazine, like *Newsweek* or *U.S. News and World Report*, for articles relating to the president and his involvement in current affairs. Students should watch the network world news broadcasts and listen to the president's weekly radio address, noting which issues he is calling out as important to the American public. Have students clip two or three articles that demonstrate the influence the media have in shaping the public's perception of the president and presidential politics. Using a separate note card for each clipping, students should write a few sentences addressing the following questions: What is the article trying to say about the president? Is it about the president's ideas or policy, or is it about his personal life? Is it favorable to the president? Can you tell what the president's own ideas are from the article? Students may paste the articles and note cards to a poster board and make a short presentation to the class summarizing their findings. Ask students to compare their findings with their classmates. After all students have made their presentations, display the poster boards in a classroom exhibit on the presidency and the media.

4. **Presidential Speeches:** Although the press is very influential in shaping public opinion of the president and of political issues, the president also can go straight to the public to get his message across through press conferences or during presidential visits or trips. One only has to think of the most memorable speeches to realize how important the president's ability to speak in public is to his administration's success. Everyone remembers, for example, this line from Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address: "Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." Have students do additional research on a famous presidential speech. Each student should prepare a short presentation for the class, summarizing the speech and describing its historical importance. Students may wish to copy down a few memorable lines from the speech to present to the class, so that their classmates get an overall feeling of the speech.

Extended Activity: Ask students to imagine that they are the president and they have an important issue that they want to present to the American people about taxes, the environment, education, or international affairs, for example. Students should think about how they will present the message to the American people. What media will they use? Will they hold a press conference, address the nation on television or radio, hold a town meeting, or put their messages on the World Wide Web? Have students volunteer to present their messages to the class using one of these methods. Try to have an example of each method. After the presentations, discuss as a class the techniques that worked best in presenting the issues and in winning the support of the class.

SECTION THREE: GRADES TEN THROUGH TWELVE

Studying the American presidency offers students an opportunity to explore the democratic political process and to expand their understanding of how this process has shaped the nation's history and continues to influence their own lives. What does it mean to be the president of the United States of America? What is the relationship of the presidency to the American people? The activities included in this section, many of which are based on primary sources, are designed to supplement your American history curriculum and to challenge students to tackle sophisticated questions and issues. The activities are adaptable for various learning styles and levels and correspond to *National Standards for History*. The content in this section relates directly to the curriculum requirements of grades 10 through 12. The topics chosen are based on *The American Presidency: A Glorious Burden*, an exhibition at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History.

TOPICS

I. Campaigns and Elections: From the Front Porch to Your T.V.
Presidents Addressed: Washington, Jackson, W. H. Harrison, McKinley, F. Roosevelt, Truman, Kennedy, Nixon, Reagan, Clinton
Time Periods Covered: 1797-1992

II. Roles and Responsibilities: One Day in the Life of a President
Presidents Addressed: Truman
Time Periods Covered: 1950

III. Limits of Power: Analyzing Political Cartoons
Presidents Addressed: A. Johnson, F. Roosevelt, Nixon, Clinton
Time Periods Covered: 1868-1998

IV. Assassination and Mourning: Recording Oral Histories
Presidents Addressed: Lincoln, Garfield, McKinley, F. Roosevelt, Truman, Kennedy, Ford, Reagan
Time Periods Covered: 1863-1981

V. Communicating the Presidency: The Media and Public Opinion
Presidents Addressed: F. Roosevelt, Kennedy, Nixon, Reagan
Time Periods Covered: 1933-present day

I. Campaigns and Elections: From the Front Porch to Your T.V.

Objectives: Students will be able to describe how presidential campaigns and elections have become transformed. Students will trace the history of voting rights.
Skills: Primary source analysis, research, chronological relationships analysis, analytical writing.
Time: 1 to 3 class periods, plus additional time for homework, depending on the number of activities chosen.
Standards: National Standards in Historical Thinking 1 (Chronological Thinking), 2 (Historical Comprehension), 3 (Historical Analysis), 4 (Historical Research), Eras 4, 7, and 9 (1797-1992).

Teacher Background

For all the cynicism about politics, Americans have a deep pride in the democratic process. During the 1800s, Americans transformed presidential elections from the concerns of a limited elite into a massive expression of popular will.

Presidential elections are more than just contests to select officeholders. They are occasions when Americans can engage in a national dialogue. They offer an opportunity to examine the state of the country and to express concerns on issues often ignored by the news media and political institutions.

The Constitution did not specify who had the right to vote in elections, leaving that decision to the states. At first, most states allowed only propertied white males to vote; by the 1820s many property requirements were dropped. Only after the Civil War did the federal government enact laws specifying certain national standards. Slowly suffrage was extended, generally applying today to citizens eighteen and older. But this did not happen without the dedicated struggle of those demanding inclusion. Controversy and discrimination characterized the history of voting, as minorities, women, the poor, and young adults fought to obtain this basic right of citizenship.

Student Activities

1. **Campaigning:** In the beginning of this nation's political life, the idea that "the office should seek the man rather than the man seek the office" governed the campaign process. During the 1800s, however, presidential campaigns began to change. Have students select three different eras and compare the method of campaigning in each. Then, as a class, discuss the positive and the negative effects of the changes in the campaign process throughout American history. Following are some campaigns to choose from: *(a)* Americans write letters to encourage Washington to accept the presidency; *(b)* Jackson supporters put up hickory poles across the country and sponsor local picnics, parades, and barbecues; *(c)* the Whig Party's "log cabin" campaign for William Henry Harrison focuses on staged events, campaign advertising, and souvenirs; *(d)* McKinley holds a "front porch" campaign while campaign manager Mark Hanna helps to run the election; *(e)* "The Roosevelt Special" carries Franklin D. Roosevelt from the East to the West coasts and back again while he makes more than fifty speeches; *(f)* Truman makes three hundred speeches to six million people during his 30,000-mile "whistle stop" train campaign; *(g)* Kennedy and Nixon hold the first televised presidential debate, and over 100 million people tune in; *(h)* Reagan looks into the camera during the televised debate and asks, "Are you better off than you were four years ago?"; *(i)* Clinton becomes the first presidential candidate to appear on the popular-culture television channel MTV.

¡SIGAMOS LA CAUSA!
Registrese Para Votar
VIVA LA RAZA
VOTER EDUCATION PROJECT, INC. 52 Fairlie Street, N.W. Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Sigamos La Causa! poster
Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of American History, Political History Collections

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2. **Voting Rights:** Divide your class into four topic groups: white males without property, women, African Americans, and young adults. Have your students research the history of their assigned population's struggle to gain the vote. Each group should create a leaflet that includes the group's slogan, mission statement, and top three arguments for the right to vote. At the bottom of the leaflet, students should include the date of enfranchisement and specific examples of the effect that this population has had on presidential elections. Students meet with members of the other three groups, hand out their flyers, and debate their platforms.

Extended Activity: Although virtually every group in the United States has demanded the right to vote, many Americans who have this right do not exercise it. In recent presidential elections, less than 50 percent of the voting-age population went to the polls. Have your students analyze the visual and verbal messages in the poster shown on the previous page. (For a larger version of the poster, see the inside front cover of this manual.) Then, using what they have learned about the voting history of one of the groups they did not research in Activity 2: Voting Rights, students can create a poster to encourage members of this population to vote.

II. Roles and Responsibilities: One Day in the Life of a President

Objectives: Students will be able to describe the diverse and demanding roles that the president of the United States must fulfill and will be able to identify presidents who have been particularly successful in each of these capacities.
Skills: Research, analysis and evaluation of a primary source.
Time: 1 to 3 class periods, plus additional time for homework, depending on number of activities chosen.
Standards: National Standards in Historical Thinking 1 (Chronological Thinking), 2 (Historical Comprehension), 3 (Historical Analysis), 4 (Historical Research), Era 9 (1950).

Teacher Background

As a nation, we place no greater responsibility on any one individual than we do on the president. Could any job be more demanding and complex? The president must serve as Commander in Chief, Chief Executive, Chief Diplomat, Ceremonial Head of State, National Leader, Manager of the Economy, and Party Leader. On any given day he might have to make life-and-death decisions, propose policies that will change the course of the country, and then greet a group of elementary school children. The greatest presidents thrived at balancing the numerous roles they are expected to play; others stumbled because they could not master some of the many duties of the office.

The featured document in this section is an entry from the presidential daily agenda for Harry S. Truman for Thursday, June 29, 1950. The activities recorded on this one day provide a glimpse into the diverse roles and responsibilities of the office of the presidency. Although the document reveals information about the individuals and groups with whom President Truman conferred, it provides only a clue to the larger story of this day in history. Just two days previously, on June 27, 1950, President Truman had ordered limited military assistance to South Korea and appealed to the United Nations to intervene. The following day, June 30, 1950, the United States ordered American ground forces into Korea and President Truman appointed General Douglas MacArthur to command the UN operations there. Consequently, in this sample page, off-the-record meetings are noted as well as conferences with several cabinet members and other high-ranking officials.

HistoryChannel.com

THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY

Thursday, June 29th:

9.55 am (Mr. Walter Gates)
(Came to see Mr. Connally and saw the President OFF THE RECORD)

10.00 am (Staff Meeting)

11.00 am Honorable Frederick Lawton, Director, Bureau of the Budget
(One-half hour)

11.30 am Honorable Charles F. Brannan, Secretary of Agriculture
(Called Mr. Connally to ask for this)

11.45 am (Vice Admiral E. B. Cochrane, Head of M. I. T.)
(Arranged by Admiral Dennison, who brought Admiral Cochrane in OFF THE RECORD)

12.00 Honorable Edward R. Dudley, American Ambassador to Liberia
(In State Department on consultation and asked if he might call before returning to his post at Monrovia)

12.10 pm (George Biddle)
(Mr. Donald Dawson) - OFF THE RECORD

12.15 pm The President received group of Overseas Employees of the State Department, engaged in work on The International Information and Educational Exchange Program.
(This group represents thirty-two overseas posts; are nationals of other countries who are now in U. S. for two months orientation and training. These foreign employees of the United States Government were chosen from overseas posts for ability and devotion to the United States International Information and Educational Exchange Program. The State Department asked that the President receive them.) - LIST ATTACHED.

12.30 pm The Secretary of State - Honorable Dean Acheson
(Usual Thursday appointment)

1.00 pm (LUNCH)

4.00 pm Press and Radio Conference

5.00 pm The following conferred with the President:
Honorable Dean Acheson - Secretary of State (and advisers)
Honorable Louis Johnson - Secretary of Defense
Honorable Thomas K. Finletter - Secretary of Air Force
Honorable Frank Pace, Jr. - Secretary of Army
Honorable Francis P. Matthews - Secretary of Navy
Honorable Stephen T. Early - Under Secretary of Defense
General Omar N. Bradley - Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff
General Hoyt S. Vandenberg
General J. Lawton Collins
Admiral Forrest P. Sherman
Honorable James Lay
Honorable George Elsey
Honorable John Foster Dulles

7.00 pm (The President left for Statler Hotel, where he attended dinner of Finance Committee of Democratic National Committee)

Presidential Daily Agenda for Harry S. Truman, Thursday, June 29, 1950
Courtesy of the Harry S Truman Library

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Student Activities

1. **Truman Agenda Analysis:** Distribute copies of the document to each student. Have students analyze the document. The following questions are suggested for student analysis:

Student Document Analysis Questions

- What are your first impressions as you explore the document?
- What kind of document is it?
- Read through the document carefully. Make a list of unusual words or phrases.
- Is there a date or some other indication of when it was written?
- Who wrote or created the document?
- For whom was the document created?
- How does this one document inform your understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the president of the United States? Make a list of the roles to which this document refers.
- What does this document imply without stating?
- What questions do you have about the document?
- How can your questions be answered?
- Was there anything surprising to you about the document?

- **Discussion:** Discuss student findings and generate a list of the seven presidential roles. Discuss student reactions to the document, particularly any unanswered questions they may have about it. Have students generate a list of qualities they believe are necessary for success in this job.

2. **Presidential Roles Research:** Students choose one of the seven presidential roles mentioned in the above text (and outlined on page 13 of this manual) and conduct research to determine which president they think has best fulfilled that role. For example, who has been the country's greatest commander in chief or its best chief executive? Students must support their choice with evidence, citing a minimum of two primary sources. Students should select five examples of specific events or circumstances to support their choice and prepare an oral presentation. Students make presentations to the class, and if more than one president is presented per role, classmates take a vote based on their fellow students' research and power of persuasion.

III. Limits of Power: Analyzing Political Cartoons

Objectives: Students will be able to describe the constitutional limits placed on the executive branch and will be able to analyze and create political cartoons.
Skills: Primary document analysis, evaluating historical perspective and bias, analytical writing.
Time: 30 minutes to 3 class periods, plus additional time for homework, depending on the number of activities chosen.
Standards: National Standards in Historical Thinking 1 (Chronological Thinking), 2 (Historical Comprehension), 3 (Historical Analysis), 4 (Historical Research), Eras 5, 8, and 10 (1868-1998).

Teacher Background

Presidential, or executive, power is not fixed and is limited by constitutional and political constraints. The Constitution prescribes a system of checks and balances whereby the powers of the federal government are shared among the executive, judicial, and legislative branches. In this delicate balance, however, the influences of the three branches continually shift. They are determined by the individuals in various offices and their ability to affect public opinion, and by the political, economic, and social climate of the day.

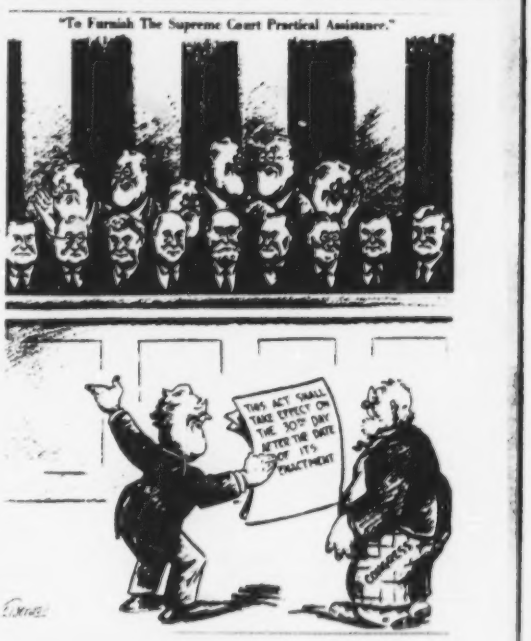
The ultimate limit on presidential power is removal from office by Congress through the impeachment process. Only three presidents in American history have seriously faced removal. The House of Representatives impeached Andrew Johnson in 1868 and William Clinton in 1998. In both cases the Senate voted to acquit. Richard Nixon, on the verge of being impeached, resigned from office in 1972.

Student Activities

1. **Cartoon Analysis:** Distribute copies of the cartoon below to each student. (For a larger version of the cartoon, see the inside back cover of this manual.) Have students analyze the cartoon. The following questions are suggested for student analysis:

Student Cartoon Analysis Questions

- What are your first impressions as you explore this cartoon?
- What objects or people appear in the cartoon? Create a list.
- Which of the objects on your list are symbols?
- What do you think each symbol means?
- Is there an action taking place in the cartoon? Describe it.
- Does the cartoon have a title or a caption? Record it.
- Are there any other words or phrases within the cartoon? List them.
- Do any important dates or numbers appear in the cartoon? List them.
- Who created the cartoon?
- Is there a date or some other indication of when it was created?
- For what audience was the cartoon created?
- What is the message of this cartoon?
- How does this cartoon discuss the limits of presidential power?
- Who would agree or disagree with the cartoon's message? Why?
- What questions do you have about the document?


"To Furnish The Supreme Court Practical Assistance."
THIS ACT SHALL TAKE EFFECT ON THE 30TH DAY AFTER THE DATE OF ITS ENACTMENT
CONGRESS

FDR "Packing the Court" cartoon
Elderman Copyright 1937, The Washington Post
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- **Discussion:** Discuss student responses and have the class determine the message of this cartoon. Discuss unanswered questions that students might have about the cartoon. Have students generate a list of constitutional and political limits placed on the president's power.

Extended Activity: Have students read Franklin D. Roosevelt's "Fireside Chat on the Reorganization of the Judiciary," March 9, 1937. (This document can be found on the web at **www.hpol.org/fdr/chat**.) Have students create a cartoon that expresses a different perspective on this issue than the cartoon printed here. Students' cartoons should contain each of the elements identified in this cartoon.

2. **Impeachment Cartoons:** Have students choose and analyze a political cartoon about the Andrew Johnson, Richard Nixon, or William Clinton impeachments. (See the Resources section for web sites and books. Students also may search for cartoons in newspapers and magazines from the time of the impeachments.) Students can write articles for a contemporary magazine that explain the key constitutional and political issues, as well as the viewpoint, portrayed in their cartoons.

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IV. Assassination and Mourning: Recording Oral Histories

Objectives: Students will be able to explain how public events have a significant impact on private individuals and will learn to gather and analyze information through oral history interviews.
Skills: Research, evaluation of oral histories and other historical information, interviewing, oral presentation, critical thinking.
Time: 1 class period for the oral history workshop, 2 weeks for independent student research and interview preparation, 2 to 3 class periods for presentations.
Standards: National Standards in Historical Thinking 3 (Historical Analysis), 4 (Historical Research), Eras 8-10 (1945-1981).

Teacher Background

The death of a president, especially by assassination, traumatizes the nation and plunges it into a period of questioning, reflection, and ritualized mourning. Beginning with an attack on Andrew Jackson in 1835, there have been eleven attempts to kill the American president. Four presidents—Abraham Lincoln, James Garfield, William McKinley, and John F. Kennedy—died from assassins' bullets. Four presidents, including Franklin D. Roosevelt, have also died in office, devastating the nation. Public expressions of grief over the death of presidents in office often demonstrate a strong, personal connection between the president and millions of Americans. Many people alive today remember these events clearly. Listening to the stories of these individuals helps us piece together the past and better understand our history.

Student Activities

1. **Oral Histories:** Have your students conduct oral histories with four people who remember the assassination of John F. Kennedy, the attempted assassinations of Truman, Ford, or Reagan, or the death of Franklin D. Roosevelt. It would be ideal to have students interview individuals who had possible different perspectives—a high school student, a veteran, a homemaker, a public official in your community—at the time of the event. (Before your students begin this activity, you may want to lead an oral history workshop. Refer to the oral history web sites listed in the Resources section.)

   - **Preparation:** Students research the event by reading newspaper and magazine articles from the week in history during which it occurred. The interviews will be most successful if students have a clear sense of what happened and why, and if they have prepared questions as a guide.

   - **Interview:** Students may use an audiotape or videotape recorder to document the interview. During the interviews, students should be active listeners, saving follow-up questions for the end of the interviews to clarify and extend the interviewees' statements.

   - **Analysis:** Students select two 3- to 5-minute segments from the interviews they conducted to present to the class. Students transcribe the segments to hand out to the class. Their selections should help students answer the following questions: Do you think oral history is a useful tool in understanding the past? Why or why not? What are oral history's limitations? What are its strengths?

V. Communicating the Presidency: The Media and Public Opinion

Objectives: Students will understand the increasingly important role that the media have played in disseminating the president's ideas and image and will be able to explain how the character of media coverage shapes public opinion.
Skills: Reading comprehension, primary document analysis, analytical writing.
Time: 3 class periods, plus additional time for homework, depending on the number of activities chosen.
Standards: National Standards in Historical Thinking 2 (Historical Comprehension), 3 (Historical Analysis), 4 (Historical Research), Eras 8-10 (1933-present).

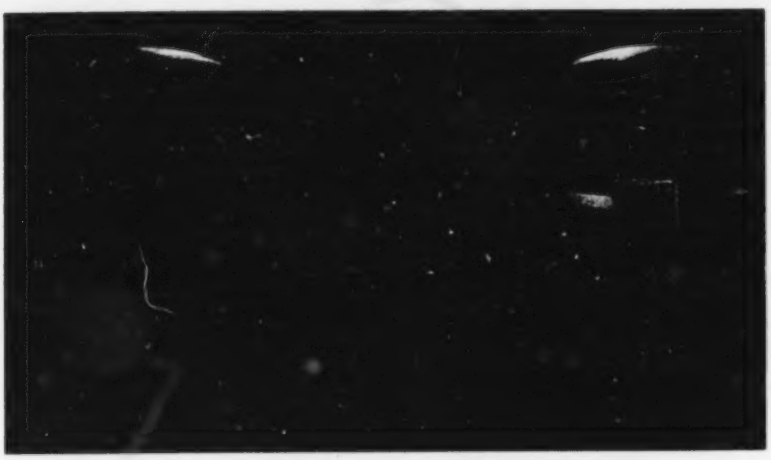
Teacher Background

The ability to communicate effectively to the American public is one characteristic of a successful presidency. Mastering the media of the period, whether newspapers, newsreels, radio, television, or even the Internet, is crucial to a president's capacity to excite people and to convey the hopes and aspirations of his administration. The media have always played an important role in shaping the president's public image, but they have become increasingly influential over the past century.

The president used newspapers as the dominant means of mass communication in the early 1900s to convey his message and maintain support for the party's issues and leadership. By the 1930s, when some 85 million Americans attended movie theaters each week, motion picture newsreels became an important means of mass communication. This development gave Americans their first look at the "performance" of presidential speeches and addresses that would become increasingly familiar through radio and television in the coming years.

At the same time, radios were turning into central fixtures in most American households and were becoming the foremost medium of mass communication. By 1924, 1.25 million American households had a radio, compared with 400,000 the previous year. While Calvin Coolidge and Herbert Hoover occasionally were heard on the radio, Franklin Roosevelt, a master of timing and tone, was the first president to effectively use the medium with his popular "fireside chats." Through radio, Roosevelt directly reached the American public as never before possible.

Television quickly eclipsed radio as the most important factor in shaping the president's public image. One of the first events to prove the power of television was the televised debate between presidential candidates John F. Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon. Many believe that Kennedy would not have won the election without the help of television. These debates ushered in a new kind of political strategy that recognized television's power to sway public opinion. In later years, Ronald Reagan's ease with television earned him the nickname "the Great Communicator."



Nixon-Kennedy debate chairs
Courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of American History, Political History Collections

Student Activities

1. **Debate in Three Media:** Students read, listen to, and watch the first Nixon-Kennedy debate, September 26, 1960. (See the Resources section for web sites that provide the transcript, as well as audio and video recordings of the debate.) Divide the class into three groups and have each group analyze the debate in one of the three media. Have students create charts of the issues discussed and the candidates' positions, placing a star next to the candidate who they think expressed the most convincing argument. Students should chart their reactions as well. For instance, as they are listening, students should describe the candidates' voices, and speech patterns, and their reactions to hearing them. As they watch the debate, students should describe each candidate's physical appearance, gestures, and presence and their reactions to seeing them. Each group votes to decide who they think "won" the debate.

   - **Discussion:** After each group presents who "won" the debate and why, lead a discussion with the class around the following question: Which is more important—the message or the medium? Students should use specific examples from the Nixon-Kennedy debate and from their own experiences.

2. **Great Communicators:** Despite their vastly different political beliefs and programs, both Franklin D. Roosevelt and Reagan have been considered great communicators, not only because they each mastered powerful media, the radio and the television respectively, but because they both had a remarkable ability to speak to and reach the public. Have students compare and contrast their first inaugural addresses. (See the Resources section for web sites that provide transcripts of presidential inaugural speeches.) Students should analyze the content, structure, tone, word choice, and other presentation techniques of each speech. Students should address the following questions: How does each speech express the newly elected president's vision of the presidency? How does each speech express the president's vision of his relationship to the American people?

3. **Print Media Bias:** Have students read and photocopy at least two articles about the president in *The New York Times* or another national daily newspaper every day for a week. Students also may go back in time to read about a past president or a past event involving a president on microfilm. Have students use examples from three of the articles they collected throughout the week to write a "Letter to the Editor," expressing their concerns about media bias. Students should address the following questions: How is the newspaper attempting to shape the public's perception of the president? What is the article saying or implying about the president? What words in the article provide clues to the writer's viewpoint and argument? Are certain facts or viewpoints missing from the article? Students may want to do additional research on the topic(s) presented in the newspaper articles to help them answer these questions.

SECTION FOUR: RESOURCES

I. Books

Grades Four Through Six

Barber, James. ***Presidents.*** (Eyewitness Books, in association with the Smithsonian Institution). New York: Dorling Kindersley, 2000.

Coulter, Laurie. ***When John and Caroline Lived in the White House.*** New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 2000.

Debnam, Betty. ***A Kid's Guide to the White House.*** Kansas City: Andrews McMeel Publishing, 1997.

Jones, Rebecca C. ***The President Has Been Shot: True Stories of the Attack on Ten U.S. Presidents.*** New York: Puffin, 1998.

McNamara, Kevin J. ***The Presidency (Your Government: How It Works).*** Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishing, 2000.

Provensen, Alice. ***The Buck Stops Here: The Presidents of the United States.*** New York: Harcourt Brace, 1997.

Rubel, David. ***Scholastic Encyclopedia of the Presidents and Their Times.*** New York: Scholastic, Inc., 1994.

St. George, Judith. ***So You Want to Be President?*** New York: Philomel Books, 2000.

Grades Seven Through Twelve

Bunch, Lonnie, Spencer Crew, Mark Hirsch, and Harry Rubenstein. ***The American Presidency: A Glorious Burden.*** Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Insitution Press, 2000.

Cunliffe, Marcus. ***The Presidency.*** Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1987.

Goodwin, Doris Kearns. ***Every Four Years: Presidential Campaign Coverage*** **1896-2000.** Arlington, Virginia: The Freedom Forum Newseum, Inc., 2000.

Kunhardt, Philip B., Jr., Philip B. Kunhardt, III, and Peter W. Kunhardt. ***The American President.*** New York: Riverhead Books, 1999.

Melder, Keith E. ***Hail to the Candidate: Presidential Campaigns from Banners to Broadcasts.*** Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992.

Rossiter, Clinton. ***The American Presidency.*** Revised edition. New York: Mentor Books, 1960.

Schlesinger, Arthur M., Jr., ed. ***Running for President: The Candidates and Their Images.*** 2 vols. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994.

II. Web Sites

National Museum of American History Exhibition Site – **americanhistory.si.edu/presidency**
The History Channel Classroom – **www.historychannel.com/classroom**
A&E's Public Speaking and Résumé Writing Tips – **www.aande.com/class/bioexper.html**
Grolier's Online Encyclopedia – **gi.grolier.com/presidents/ea/ea_toc.html**
History of the Vote – **38.202.153.25/gocopernicus/elections/history_of_the_vote**
Impeachment – **www.crf-usa.org/impeachment/impeachment.html** and **www.impeach-andrewjohnson.com**
Inaugural Addresses – **bartleby.com/124/index**
Internet Public Library Presidents Site – **www.ipl.org/ref/POTUS**
Nixon-Kennedy Debate – **www.mbcnet.org/debateweb/html/greatdebate** and **www.cs.umb.edu/jfklibrary/60-1st.htm**
Oral History – **www.historychannel.com/classroom** and **www.dohistory.org/on_your_own/toolkit/oralHistory.html**
Presidential Campaigns – **scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/americavotes** and **www.newseum.org/everyfouryears**
Presidential Libraries Sites – **www.nara.gov/nara/president/address.html**
Presidential Speeches – **www.netcolony.com/news/presidents/speeches.html** and **www.historychannel.com/speeches/index.html**
Voter Turnout – **www.bettercampaigns.org/documents/turnout.htm** and **www.fec.gov/elections.html**

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"To Furnish The Supreme Court Practical Assistance."

Great Social Changes Sweep World Today

By Raymond Leslie Buell

The Post presents the fourth of a series of articles by the president of the Foreign Policy Association.

BOTH in some ... es and dictator-... ships underneath the war-monger-... ing of the powers lies a social ... to be suffering from anemia, but ... ness—despite the steps taken ... extension—the country is demon-... strating dynamic qualities.

No country controlling or ... many-fold 200 families, the govern-... ment now rests with the People's ... Front—a Left coalition holding the ... majority. Communist parties in the ... French workers' ... since June the ... Paris Parliament has enacted 19 ... and are distributing ... dollars' ... living. Unlike ... regime—and ... majority of the ... through the ... propaganda of the ... Moreover, ... greatly reduced by ... ures. Germany and Italy have ... varied an increasing share of the ... national income to the unproductive ... purpose of armament. As a result, ... the importation of consumers' goods ... tends to decline, and with it the ... standard of living. It is a curious ... paradox that Germany and Italy are ... the only countries in Europe today ... which are ... ... eliminated and ... ... cannot long ... ... remain the heart of the ... democratic order, ...

No Communist Lenins Foreseen By Observer

While ... emerging ...

HDR Packing the Court Cartoon
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Time Line of the Presidency

George Washington 1789–1797

John Adams 1797–1801

Thomas Jefferson 1801–1809

James Madison 1809–1817

James Monroe 1817–1825

John Quincy Adams 1825–1829

Andrew Jackson 1829–1837

Martin Van Buren 1837–1841

William Henry Harrison 1841

John Tyler 1841–1845

James K. Polk 1845–1849

Zachary Taylor 1849–1850

Millard Fillmore 1850–1853

Franklin Pierce 1853–1857

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Smithsonian
National Museum of American History
Behring Center

Warren G. Harding
1921–1923

Calvin Coolidge
1923–1929

Herbert Hoover
1929–1933

Franklin Delano Roosevelt
1933–1945

Harry S. Truman
1945–1953

Dwight D. Eisenhower
1953–1961

John F. Kennedy
1961–1963

Lyndon B. Johnson
1963–1969

Richard M. Nixon
1969–1974

Gerald R. Ford
1974–1977

James E. Carter
1977–1981

Ronald Reagan
1981–1989

George Bush
1989–1993

William J. Clinton
1993–2001

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The American Presidency

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